

Message Text

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OSD:SECDEF BROWN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL NATO CAPITALS IMMEDIATE
INFO USNMR SHAPE BRUSSELS PRIORITY
USLOSACLANT NORFOLK PRIORITY
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER PRIORITY
CINCLANT NORFOLK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 068641

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO

SUBJECT: NATO LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM

1. FOR ALL CAPITALS EXCEPT ATHENS AND PARIS. PLEASE PASS
FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY OF DEFENSE BROWN TO
MINISTER OF DEFENSE USING APPROPRIATE SALUTATION:

BEGIN TEXT:

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MY STAFF HAS JUST FINISHED ITS PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF
THE LONG TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM REPORTS ON CONVENTIONAL FORCE
IMPROVEMENTS SUBMITTED BY THE NATO TASK FORCES. WE ARE
FAVORABLY IMPRESSED WITH MOST OF THEM, AND BELIEVE THAT
THEY PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR A BOLD AND FAR-REACHING
COOPERATIVE PROGRAM WHICH CAN BE CARRIED OUT AT A COST
THAT IS ECONOMICALLY AND POLITICALLY FEASIBLE.

OUR ROUGH PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS IS THAT THE TOTAL COST OF ALL LTDP PROPOSALS WOULD BE IN THE RANGE OF \$50 TO \$55 BILLION FOR THE SIX MID-TERM YEARS 1979-84, PLUS ANOTHER 30 PLUS BILLION OVER THE LONGER TERM (1985-93). WHILE THESE ARE IN ABSOLUTE TERMS LARGE SUMS, EVEN FOR THE ALLIANCE AS A WHOLE, THEY ARE ACTUALLY VERY MODEST IN COMPARISON TO TOTAL PROJECTED NATO DEFENSE BUDGETS, INCLUDING ESTIMATED REAL GROWTH, OVER THE NEXT 15 YEARS. THE LATTER AMOUNT TO OVER \$2800 BILLION IN 1977 DOLLARS. HENCE THE ENTIRE LTDP WOULD ONLY TAKE ABOUT 3 PERCENT OF THESE PROJECTED NATO DEFENSE OUTLAYS. EVEN THE MORE FULLY DEVELOPED MID-TERM PROPOSALS THROUGH 1984 WOULD ONLY TAKE ABOUT 5 PERCENT TO 6 PERCENT OF TOTAL PROJECTED OUTLAYS.

EQUALLY IMPORTANT, MANY OF THE MID-TERM LTDP PROPOSALS ARE ALREADY IN NATIONAL PROGRAMS. IN FACT OUR FIRST ROUGH CUT ANALYSIS SUGGESTS THAT ALMOST TWO-THIRDS OF THOSE FOR THE PERIOD 1979-84 ARE ALREADY BEING PROGRAMMED. SOME OTHERS ARE COVERED IN THE 1979-84 FORCE GOALS WHICH NATIONS HAVE TENTATIVELY ACCEPTED IN BRUSSELS. IN SHORT, IT APPEARS THAT EVEN IF WE ALL AGREED THIS MAY TO THE ENTIRE LTDP AS PRESENTLY FORMULATED BY THE NATO TASK FORCES, IT WOULD BE WELL WITHIN THE REALM OF THE AFFORDABLE.
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OF COURSE, NOT ALL TASK FORCE PROPOSALS ARE LIKELY TO BE ACCEPTABLE, AT LEAST IN THEIR PRESENT FORM. SOME MAY HAVE TO BE MODIFIED OR PERHAPS STRETCHED OUT IN TIME. OTHERS COULD READILY BE FUNDED VIA MODIFICATIONS OF NATIONAL PROGRAMS ALREADY ADDRESSED TO SIMILAR NEEDS. TO THE EXTENT THAT RESOURCES ARE NOT AVAILABLE FOR EVERYTHING, PRIORITIES CAN BE IMPOSED.

I WANT TO SHARE THESE PRELIMINARY REACTIONS WITH YOU, BECAUSE I KNOW THAT MANY ALLIED STAFFS HAVE BEEN CONCERNED LEST THE TOTAL LONG TERM PROGRAM BE SO LARGE AS TO BE INDIGESTIBLE. AT FIRST GLANCE, THIS SEEMS NOT TO BE THE CASE. IF WE PULL TOGETHER, WE HAVE THE RESOURCES TO DO THE JOB. IN TERMS OF WHAT THE US IS BEING ASKED TO DO, WHICH IS BY FAR THE LARGEST SHARE OF ANY ALLY, I BELIEVE THAT WE CAN RESPOND POSITIVELY TO THE BULK OF THE PROPOSALS, PROVIDED THAT OUR CONGRESS IS CONVINCED THAT WE ARE NOT PAYING MORE THAN OUR FAIR SHARE OF WHAT MUST BE A TOTAL ALLIANCE EFFORT.

THEREFORE, I URGE YOU TO JOIN ME IN INSTRUCTING

OUR STAFFS TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO REACH CONSENSUS ON
THE LTDP IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS REMAINING BEFORE THE
SUMMIT- WE DEFENSE MINISTERS HAVE AN HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY
TO ACHIEVE A WHOLE NEW DIMENSION OF ALLIANCE COOPERATION
IN THE INTERESTS OF THE COMMON DEFENSE--AN OPPORTUNITY
WE CANNOT AFFORD TO MISS IN THE LIGHT OF THE EVOLVING
THREAT. I SHALL BE IN TOUCH WITH YOU FURTHER AS MY
OWN THINKING EVOLVES. SINCERELY, END TEXT.

2. FOR USNATO. PLEASE FURNISH INFORMATION COPY TO SYG.
VANCE

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